



JOHNSTOWN QUARTERLY NEWS

WINTER 2025 ISSUE

KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY CONNECTED

JAG IS NOW MUCLC – THE MUNICIPAL UTILITY COALITION OF LICKING COUNTY

Formerly known as JAG, Johnstown, Alexandria, and Granville have rebranded their water and sewer partnership as the “Municipal Utility Coalition of Licking County” to facilitate its plan to advance growth and prosperity in western Licking County while preserving the sense of neighborhood and natural resources that have attracted residents and business to call western Licking County home.

The Coalition is currently the water and wastewater service provider to over 12,000 people living and working in western Licking County and seeks to provide these services to the region as it grows so as to preserve local control over local resources. Municipalities like Johnstown, Alexandria, and Granville are looking ahead to plan and manage the residential and spin-off economic growth that accompanies the monumental manufacturing projects in our area.



What others are saying about MUCLC

Herb Koehler, Granville Village Manager stated: “It will be an economic boost to everyone in Licking County, but as municipal leaders, we must work together to implement a holistic development plan that is best for everyone. The Coalition is committed to working with all the stakeholders—state, township, and county officials, area residents, and businesses—to promote financially sound long-range regional development,” he added. “To that end, we have engaged the respected utility planning firm EMH&T to develop a comprehensive facility plan which will evaluate projected needs for both water and sanitary sewer service in the region over the next 20+ years and determine how the Coalition can best meet these needs.”

Denison University President Dr. Adam Weinberg wrote to Governor DeWine and Ohio EPA Director Anne Vogel – “The Coalition’s strategic and collaborative approach ensures that our region’s growth enhances rather than diminishes quality of life for residents of Licking County, setting a model for successful development for the 21st century.”

Jeff Brown, Superintendent, Granville Exempted Village Schools said “Unless economic development is thoughtfully and holistically managed, expanded water and wastewater services will result in unplanned and fragmented growth and that, in turn, would create a crisis for western Licking County schools. Therefore, utility expansion should always be aligned with a comprehensive strategy, a strategy that has been developed with input from and the acceptance of the residents and other stakeholders.”

The organization of the Coalition provides significant benefits:

- As municipalities, the members of the Coalition are responsible for public infrastructure such as parks, streets, sidewalks, storm sewers, and lighting; public services such as police; land use planning, and economic development; as well as water and sewer services. As a result, the Coalition is constantly aware of and responsive to ALL the interests and concerns of local residents.

- The Coalition has access to planning and development departments, which have expertise in all aspects of development

and land use planning, including zoning, economic development tools including (TIFs, CRAs, CEDAs, and JEDDs, income tax programs, grants, financing tools, and creative revenue financing. Such tools can be best utilized by municipalities for the benefit of economic development, public infrastructure improvements and public services.

- The Coalition is actively supported by the Johnstown-Monroe School District, the Granville Exempted Village School District, and Denison University, principally due to its holistic

and planful view of growth and the Coalition’s recognition that haphazard development would likely devastate the excellent schools that are essential to the community’s long-term desirability and prosperity.

- The Coalition believes that water and wastewater service should be viewed and managed to facilitate financially sound long-range regional development, not merely immediate development to maximize near-term revenue.

BUILDING A THRIVING FUTURE: THE GREATER JOHNSTOWN PARKS AND RECREATION DISTRICT

The City of Johnstown is proud to highlight the work of the Greater Johnstown Parks and Recreation District (GJPRD) Board, an essential part of our vision for a stronger, more connected community. Established in 2021, this board was created to meet a growing need for dedicated leadership in parks and recreation planning, ensuring our residents enjoy enhanced opportunities for health, wellness, and community spirit.

The GJPRD Board includes dedicated members Nicole Shook, Mike Giannini, Frank Cea, Daryl Wernette, and a soon-to-be-appointed 5th representative. Together, they are shaping the future of recreation in Johnstown, preserving our rural heritage while fostering a vibrant, active community for all.

Why GJPRD Matters

As Johnstown continues to grow, so does the demand for high-quality recreational facilities, programs, and events for youth, families and seniors. The City recognized the need for a focused group to develop and manage these opportunities. By forming GJPRD, we're ensuring that our parks and recreation system is thoughtfully designed and accessible to everyone in the Johnstown-Monroe Local School District.

Through collaboration with local nonprofits, community groups, and volunteers, GJPRD is expanding recreational sports, encouraging active lifestyles, and providing spaces where residents can come together. It's about more than just parks—it's about creating a sense of community that benefits all generations.

Exciting Updates

This year, GJPRD is taking the lead on planning and hosting Johnstown's beloved July 4 Celebration. This is an example of how the organization can support community activities and further develop existing events as the organization ideates other programming.

Looking Ahead

Currently the GJPRD Board is looking to identify additional open space that could accommodate the current and future recreational needs of the Johnstown community. Once these potential sites are identified the Board can submit proposals for resident and partners to review and formulate funding opportunities which could make hypotheticals become a reality.



Above: Hannah Park located in the heart of Johnstown.

Below: GJPRD board members (left to right, top to bottom): Nicole Shook; Mike Giannini, Frank Cea, Daryl Wernette.



GET INVOLVED

The success of GJPRD relies on the involvement of our community. We invite you to lend your time and talents to support Johnstown's events and initiatives. Whether it's volunteering at a community celebration or helping shape the future of our parks, your contributions can make a difference.

To learn more or volunteer, contact Chairperson Mike Giannini at mgiannini@johnstownohio.org or Secretary Nicole Shook at nshook@johnstownohio.org. Public meetings are held on the last Thursday of each month, from 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM, at the Johnstown Mary E. Babcock Library.

Follow GJPRD on Facebook for the latest news and updates



CITY ROUND-UP: KEY HIGHLIGHTS FROM JOHNSTOWN

Economic Development

Cologix, a leader in the data center industry, has made an investment in our community to support the technology needs of its partners. Cologix choosing Johnstown is confirmation our updated planning policies are paying off. This is a catalyst project for positive momentum towards Johnstown's bright future.

2025 Budget Brings New Opportunities

City Council has approved the 2025 budget, which reflects Johnstown's commitment to best serve the growing needs of the community. The budget allocates resources to refill critical positions, including a Police Officer, City Planner and Superintendent/Director for streets, lands, buildings and parks. These updates ensure the City can address current needs while preparing for future development.

School Partnership

Dr Wagner and City staff recently with a design and planning firm (MKSK) to do a high-level inventory/review of property and facility assets, items of discussion included administrative buildings, classroom space, athletic facilities, open field space and City facilities. Review and analysis will take place to better determine the functionality of our current sites as well as opportunities and areas for future expansion and facility placement. Planning now will prevent these Greenfield sites from developing in a way that impedes the JMLS and the City's ability to maximize efficiencies and effectively provide services. We anticipate expanding this discussion with neighboring townships, currently Monroe so that our collaboration efforts are maximized.

Design Review Guidelines

MKSK will lead the creation of overarching design guidelines for the city of Johnstown by working with the Council, City staff and an Advisory Committee appointed by City Council. Recommended amendments will build upon community input received during the development of the Johnstown Comprehensive Plan. The goal of this effort is to provide more direction for the City and the Design Review Board in their evaluation and approval process. It is also intended to inform all parties (city, landowners, residents, businesses, developers, etc.) to the design expectations of new development and rehabilitation within the city.

The Design Guidelines will focus on components such as:

- Buildings and Form | building-specific exterior standards – height and massing, materials, colors (primary, secondary, accent), storefronts, entrances, first-floor transparency, upper floors, signage for both renovations and new construction.
- Site Design | building setbacks and orientation, access and parking lot configurations, pedestrian way, lighting, trash/storage, landscape/screening



Life-Saving Efforts Honored in the Police Department

The Johnstown Police Department recently celebrated a heroic moment during a special life-saving ceremony. This recognition highlights the dedication and quick actions of our local officers in ensuring the safety and well-being of our residents. Whether it's responding to

emergencies or building trust within the community, our police department exemplifies service at its finest. As we recognize this achievement, we are reminded of the vital role our first responders play in making Johnstown a safe and thriving place to live.

TID and Roadway project/studies

ASP will be conducted a study on the 62 & 37 intersection and crews will be in the area collecting data. This study is being funded by the State of Ohio through the LTID. This initiative will focus on short, medium, and long-term solutions to roadway congestion in that area. Additionally, our City engineers (EMH&T) are currently reviewing how various projects taking place in and around Intel will cohesively plug into Johnstown roadway buildout expectations.

Grants

The City of Johnstown has identified the Various Pavement and Sidewalk Improvements Project for the 2024 Ohio Public Works Commission, District 17 (Round 39) submittal. The City has identified the need to focus pavement maintenance and pedestrian facilities improvements within the northwest area of the City which has been under serviced due to financial and prioritization of previous infrastructure planning. These neighborhoods and roadways were originally built in the 1930s-1950s. The project will address the need to renew the aging infrastructure to maintain the roadway level of service, quality of these neighborhoods, and improve the walkability/connectivity of these neighborhoods. The proposed improvement will include pavement maintenance (mill and fill), full depth spot repair, reprofiling of roadway (as needed), and some pedestrian facility (sidewalk) upgrades. The following roads would be included in this project: McCracken Drive, Pershing Avenue, Liberty Street, Fairview Drive, Drury Lane, and Recreation Drive.

Estimated Total Cost.....	\$350,000
Local Participation.....	\$91,000 (26% of project cost)
LTIP Request (Grant)	\$259,000 (74%)

The City of Johnstown has identified the West Douglas Street Corridor Improvements for the 2024 Ohio Public Works Commission, District 17 (Round 39) submittal. The project corridor is approximately 750 feet and will include reconstruction of the roadway pavement, subgrade/drainage improvements, and curb and gutter replacement. Pedestrian facilities including ADA-compliant curb ramps, sidewalk will be installed throughout the corridor. The area drainage and storm sewer will be evaluated and improved to minimize flooding/ponding within the right-of-way and to accommodate the current City design standards.

Estimated Total Cost.....	\$1,200,000
Local Participation ...	\$312,000 (26% of project cost)
(Loan).....	\$488,000 (40%) Loan Payment \$28,000/yr, over 15 yrs
(Grant).....	\$400,000 (30%)

UPCOMING
EVENTS



JANUARY 2025

JYAA Spring Sports Registration
Opens 1/4, Closes 2/16

Community Breakfast
at American Legion..... 8-10a • 1/18

Martin Luther King Day 1/20

Winter Tree Identification
Walk at Morris Woods State
Nature Preserve..... 1-2:30p • 1/25

FEBRUARY 2025

Presidents Day.....2/17

Community Breakfast
at American Legion..... 8-10a • 2/15

MARCH 2025

Community Breakfast
at American Legion..... 8-10a • 3/15

Johnstown Monroe Local School
District SPRING BREAK ... 3/24-3/28



HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Celebrating the Holiday Season

We embraced the holiday season with community spirit! The annual Santa Parade organized by the Johnstown CCL and the Johnstown Chamber of Commerce brought joy to Main Street, and this year’s Christmas tree has special meaning. Donated by Messerall Tree Farm in memory of their son, Adam Messerall, who passed away this year, the tree stands as a reminder of Johnstown’s close-knit and compassionate community. Events like these bring residents together and showcase the heart of what makes Johnstown home.

67th Annual Santa Parade

The Johnstown Children’s Conservation League (CCL), a nationally recognized women’s organization founded in 1945, has been the heart of Johnstown’s holiday traditions for decades. For 67 years, the CCL has organized the annual Santa Parade, a festive celebration that brings the community together to ring in the holiday season.

The tradition began with the creation of the Santa House, a beloved place where children could visit Santa Claus free of charge. Over the years, the Santa House has remained a highlight, offering kids the chance to share their holiday wishes and experience the magic of the season.

This year’s parade, held on December 7, continued the cherished legacy. Beginning on South Main Street, the parade made its way through town to the cheers of excited families lining the route. Afterward, Santa welcomed children at the Santa House on North Main Street, creating joyful memories for families.

The parade was part of the larger “I’ll Be Home for Christmas” downtown celebration, featuring local businesses, food trucks, games, hot cocoa, and the annual tree lighting ceremony. The event showcased the community’s collaborative spirit, with residents and businesses coming together to make the season bright.

Thanks to the tireless efforts of the Johnstown CCL and enthusiastic community participation, the Santa Parade remains a treasured tradition that strengthens Johnstown’s sense of unity and joy.



For more information about the Johnstown Children’s Conservation League and their work, visit their Facebook page.

